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SCHWEGMAN, LUNDBERG & WOESSNER/EBAY
P.O. BOX 2938
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

EXAMINER	
ROSWELL, MICHAEL	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2173	

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

USPTO@SLWIP.COM
request@slwip.com

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/441,388	ACKLEY ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	MICHAEL ROSWELL	2173	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *17 December 2010*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *27-29,31-35,38-40,42-46 and 49-70* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *27-29,31-35,38-40,42-46 and 49-70* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *20101217*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to the amendment to the claims filed 17 December 2010.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 27-29, 31-34, 49-65, 69 and 70 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,119,152 (Carlin et al), "Domain Names - Concepts and Facilities" (RFC 1034), and Fisher et al (US Patent 5,835,896), hereinafter Fisher.

Regarding claim 27, Carlin discloses in col. 2, lines 10-38 a multi-provider (i.e. plurality of sales interfaces) online sales system, wherein a plurality of service providers are each allocated a subset of subscriber features and a customized user interface. Figures 3a-3j illustrate the user interface provided by the multi-provider online sales system, which allows each service provider to build a customized sales interface by receiving user inputs for an arrangement of a plurality of user interface elements, the plurality of user interface elements defining display attributes for at least one of the plurality of sales interfaces, at col. 6, line 37 through col. 7, line 13. In col. 5, lines 16-42, Carlin further discloses that each subscriber of a service provider sees the associated online service as independent even though the server providing the interface is maintained by the multi-provider online sales system. In col. 1, lines 19-27, Carlin explains that online services can operate over a TCP/IP network. This embodiment would further require that each sales interface and the host computer be located at

a unique network address. Carlin further teaches that the sales server is operative to create the impression to a first user that the first user is still using a first member site through which the first user accessed a first sales interface and to create the impression to a first user that the first user is still using a second member site through which the second user accessed a second sales interface, as the menu system in Carlin remains consistent with the sales interface found in Figs. 3a-3j Carlin fails to specifically disclose, though, that the first domain is a sub-domain of an address mapped to the first member site and that the second domain is a sub-domain of an address mapped to the second member site. However, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to map each interface to a different subdomain because of Carlin's suggestion in col. 8, lines 54-56, which says that it should appear to the subscriber that he or she is connected to an online service that is administered by that service provider. One method for providing such an appearance is through the use of subdomains. RFC 1034, published by the Network Working Group in 1987, describes how the domain hierarchy works on page 8:

> A domain is identified by a domain name, and consists of that part of the domain name space that is at or below the domain name which specifies the domain. A domain is a subdomain of another domain if it is contained within that domain. This relationship can be tested by seeing if the subdomain's name ends with the containing domain's name. For example, A.B.C.D is a subdomain of B.C.D, C.D, D, and " ".

Each service provider in Carlin's invention can thus be a subdomain of the domain operated by the multi-provider online sales system. If, for example, the primary domain was multi-provider.com, a plurality of service providers could be mapped to provider1.multi-provider.com, provider2.multi-provider.com, and so on. The service providers' interfaces can then be operated by a single sever while creating the impression that they are operated by unique domains. Subdomains, however, need not necessarily be operated by a single server. After all, yahoo.com and google.com are both subdomains of the .com domain, but are operated by different servers. Accordingly, each service provider can have its own subdomain that is

operated by a unique server. For example, site1.provider1.multi-provider.com and site2.provider1.multi-provider.com can be operated by a server that is separate from the one that operates provider1.multi-provider.com and provider2.multi-provider.com. Links can then be created from pages on one server (i.e. member sites) to pages on another server wherein both sets of pages are mapped to the same parent domain. The examiner thus submits that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a hierarchy of domains and subdomains as taught by RFC 1034 in combination with the teachings of Carlin so as to anticipate the claimed invention. As suggested by Carlin, such a combination would have been advantageous because it would allow the multi-provider online sales system to maintain the impression that each sales interface is operated by its respective service provider and not by a single common entity.

However, Carlin and RFC 1034 fail to explicitly teach a central database system adapted to store listings of items for sale, the listings received from the plurality of sales interfaces, the central database to index the listings, wherein the listings are offered on at least one of the plurality of sales interfaces, and receive bids for the items for sale from the plurality of sales interfaces, and store the received bids in an item bidding history.

Fisher teaches an electronic auction system similar to the sales system of Carlin and RFC 1034. Furthermore, Fisher teaches a central database system adapted to store listings of items for sale, the listings received from the plurality of sales interfaces, the central database to index the listings, wherein the listings are offered on at least one of the plurality of sales interfaces, and receive bids for the items for sale from the plurality of sales interfaces, and store the received bids in an item bidding history (taught as the auction system comprising a central database for storing and receiving listings of items for sale, bids on those items, and posting a “catalog page” containing data about the items, at col. 4, line 46 through col. 5, line 6. Fisher

shows the listings being received from a sales server, similar to that of Carlin, through the automated uploading of merchandise information to the database, at col. 8, lines 42-53. See also Fisher, col. 7, lines 24-28 and col. 6, lines 13-29).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Carlin, RFC 1034, and Fisher before him at the time the invention was made to modify the sales interface of Carlin and RFC 1034 to include the auction server of Fisher. One would have been motivated to make such a combination for the advantage of implementing an automated, continuous auction. See Fisher, col. 4, lines 12-29.

Referring to claim 28, the teachings of RFC 1034 are all associated with Domain Name System (DNS) mappings such that the sales server further operates to generate a Domain Name System (DNS) mapping of subdomain names for the first and second sales interfaces, wherein at least a portion of each of the subdomain names is consistent with the unique network addresses of the corresponding first and second sales interfaces. The mapping of different sites is thus performed via DNS mapping.

Referring to claim 29, Carlin discloses in Table 1 a plurality of services that can be offered via the customized user interfaces, and are inherently presented on different pages linked by the menu structure illustrated in Figure 3j.

Referring to claims 31 and 32, Carlin and RFC 1034 fail to explicitly disclose that the first sales interface includes elements that are also included in the first set of pages and that the second sales interface includes elements that are also included in the second set of pages. However, the examiner submits that it is notoriously well known in the state of the art that pages

mapped to the same domain commonly reuse graphical interface elements such as headers, banners, menus, links, and backgrounds so as to maintain a common look and feel when navigating amongst pages. The examiner takes OFFICIAL NOTICE of this teaching. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include common interface elements among the first and second sales interfaces and their respective sets of pages in order for the multi-provider online sales system to maintain the impression that each sales interface and its associated pages is operated by its respective service provider.

Referring to claim 33, Carlin and RFC 1034 fail to explicitly disclose that sales interfaces include interface elements comprising at least part of their respective domain names. However, the examiner submits that it is notoriously well known in the state of the art that parts of the domain names are typically indicative of the respective service provider's name (e.g. Amazon.com), and are thus very commonly included in sales interfaces. The examiner takes OFFICIAL NOTICE of this teaching. Furthermore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include part of the domain name in a user interface as a mechanism for associating the domain name with the name of the service provider. Such an association makes it easier for users to re a network address and navigate to a service provider's sales interface.

Referring to claim 34, Carlin teaches a customizable user interface for the plurality of sales interfaces including receiving a user arrangement of a plurality of user interface tokens, the user interface tokens defining display attributes of at least one view of at least one of the plurality of sales interfaces, wherein the user interface tokens represent parts of the sales

interface that are moveable or customizable (at col. 6, line 37 through col. 7, line 13, and seen in Figs. 3a-3j).

Regarding claim 49, Carlin explains in col. 2, lines 10-20 that the invention is a multi-provider on line service allowing a plurality of service providers to uniquely configure the appearance of their respective user interfaces. Each of these service providers can inherently belong to different legal entities.

Regarding claim 50, the naming conventions of RFC 1034 teaches the first domain including a domain name for the first server that includes a subdomain name for the sales server that includes a subdomain name for the first user interface, and wherein the second domain includes a domain name for the second server that includes a subdomain name for the sales server that includes a domain name for the second user interface.

Regarding claim 51, the use of registration processes to make online interactions and transactions more secure are notoriously well known in the art, and would be obvious to include in any system incorporating sales or auctions. The examiner takes OFFICIAL NOTICE of these teachings.

Regarding claim 52, Carlin and RFC 1034 teach access to a sales/auction server without the use of servers.

Regarding claim 53, Applicant's own specification admits that "Internet auction systems are well known" (page 1). As such, the sales server of Carlin is analogous to an auction server,

and the examiner contends that as claim 27 states, “the first sales interface includes links to a first set of pages not operated by the sales server but being mapped to the first domain”, the cited limitation inherently teaches the first set of pages being used to access the first sales interface.

Regarding claim 54, Applicant’s own specification admits that “Internet auction systems are well known" (page 1). As such, the sales interface of Carlin is analogous to an auction interface, and therefore receiving a bid from a user is inherent in the sales/auction interface of Carlin.

Regarding claims 55 and 56, as the sales/auction servers have been disclosed in claim 27 to "operate the first and second sales interfaces", it is inherent that the auction server generates the first sales interface, and that the interface resemble the first set of pages, disclosed to be linked to the first interface.

Regarding claim 57, Fisher teaches the sales system being an auction system, and the items for sale are auction items, and the first and second sales interfaces are auction interfaces (taught as the auction system, biddable items, and description pages of col. 4, line 46 through col. 5, line 6).

Regarding claim 58, Fisher teaches each auction interface corresponding to an auction site (the merchandise catalog pages), and wherein the central database system is adapted to store action items available on the auction sites (taught as the merchandise database, seen at col. 4, line 46 through col. 5, line 6).

Regarding claim 59, Fisher teaches the sales server being an auction server, and the auction server being further adapted to receive bids from the auctions sites (taught as the ability to receive bids through the merchandise pages, as seen in Fig. 2 and at col. 4, line 46 through col. 5, line 6).

Regarding claim 60, Fisher teaches the auction server being further adapted to store the received bids in the central database system (taught as the storing of bid information in a bid database, at col. 4, lines 46-60).

Regarding claim 61, Fisher teaches the auction server being further adapted to index the received bids (taught as the use of a bid manager for sorting and marking received bids, at col. 9, lines 1-16).

Regarding claim 62, Fisher teaches the received bids being stored as part of a series of item bidding histories in the central database system, as can be seen in Fig. 2, as bids are time stamped, stored, and subsequently displayed.

Regarding claim 63, Fisher teaches upon expiration of an auction period for an item, the auction server determines a highest bid and compares the bid to a reserve price wherein if the highest bid is above the reserve price the bid is successful (taught as the use of a “Buy or Bid” format where only bids greater than a predetermined price are deemed “successful”, at col. 11, line 44 through col. 12, line 12).

Regarding claim 64, Fisher teaches the auction server being adapted to receive a listing file from a user and merge the listing file into the listings stored in the central database system as a series of listing items (taught as the ability of an operator to upload merchandise information into the database, at col. 8, lines 42-51).

Regarding claim 65, Fisher teaches the auction server comprising a publisher subsystem adapted to create at least a portion of the first or second sales interfaces prior to receiving a user request (taught as the creation of merchandise catalog pages by the automated auction manager, at col. 4, lines 46 through col. 5, line 6).

Regarding claim 69, Fisher teaches wherein a sales server provides an auction service (col. 7, line 66 through col. 8, line 14), in combination with the plurality of sales interfaces as taught by Carlin.

Regarding claim 70, Fisher teaches wherein the sales server generates a web page for each of the plurality of sales interfaces (see col. 6, lines 13-30, in combination with the plurality of sales interfaces in Carlin).

Claims 35, 38-40, and 42-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carlin, “Domain Names - Concepts and Facilities” (RFC 1034), Lowery et al (US Patent 5,894,554), hereinafter Lowery, and Fisher.

Referring to claims 35 and 46, as discussed above, Carlin and RFC 1034 disclose a host server and a plurality of sales interfaces that provide the impression that they are being

operated by different entities. In Figures 3a-3j, Carlin illustrates a customization interface responsive to user input to define the sales interfaces. As mentioned above, Carlin explains in col. 8, lines 54-56, that from the subscriber's standpoint, it should appear that he/she is connected to an online service which is administered by that service provider. Additionally, Carlin explains in col. 4, lines 37-51 that service providers can upload data for access solely to its own subscribers. Therefore, it is implied that the customization interface is operative to provide different headers for each sales interface. Carlin further teaches that the sales server is operative to create the impression to a first user that the first user is still using a first member site through which the first user accessed a first sales interface and to create the impression to a first user that the first user is still using a second member site through which the second user accessed a second sales interface, as the menu system in Carlin remains consistent with the sales interface found in Figs. 3a-3j. Carlin fails to specifically disclose, though, that the first domain is a sub-domain of an address mapped to the first member site and that the second domain is a sub-domain of an address mapped to the second member site. However, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to map each interface to a different subdomain because of Carlin's suggestion in col. 8, lines 54-56, which says that it should appear to the subscriber that he or she is connected to an online service that is administered by that service provider. One method for providing such an appearance is through the use of subdomains. RFC 1034, published by the Network Working Group in 1987, describes how the domain hierarchy works on page 8:

> A domain is identified by a domain name, and consists of that part of the domain name space that is at or below the domain name which specifies the domain. A domain is a subdomain of another domain if it is contained within that domain. This relationship can be tested by seeing if the subdomain's name ends with the containing domain's name. For example, A.B.C.D is a subdomain of B.C.D, C.D, D, and " ".

Each service provider in Carlin's invention can thus be a subdomain of the domain operated by the multi-provider online sales system. If, for example, the primary domain was multi-provider.com, a plurality of service providers could be mapped to provider1.multi-provider.com, provider2.multi-provider.com, and so on. The service providers' interfaces can then be operated by a single sever while creating the impression that they are operated by unique domains. Subdomains, however, need not necessarily be operated by a single server. After all, yahoo.com and google.com are both subdomains of the .com domain, but are operated by different servers. Accordingly, each service provider can have its own subdomain that is operated by a unique server. For example, site1.provider1.multi-provider.com and site2.provider1.multi-provider.com can be operated by a server that is separate from the one that operates provider1.multi-provider.com and provider2.multi-provider.com. Links can then be created from pages on one server (i.e. member sites) to pages on another server wherein both sets of pages are mapped to the same parent domain. The examiner thus submits that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a hierarchy of domains and subdomains as taught by RFC 1034 in combination with the teachings of Carlin so as to anticipate the claimed invention. As suggested by Carlin, such a combination would have been advantageous because it would allow the multi-provider online sales system to maintain the impression that each sales interface is operated by its respective service provider and not by a single common entity.

Carlin and RFC 1034 fail to explicitly teach a first server at a fourth network address to operate the first set of pages, and a second server at a fifth network address to operate a second set of pages.

Lowery teaches a multi-server architecture similar to that of Carlin and RFC 1034. Furthermore, Lowery teaches a first server at a fourth network address to operate the first set

of pages, and a second server at a fifth network address to operate a second set of pages, taught as the use of multiple page servers to handle page requests, at col. 2, lines 20-35 and seen in Fig. 4.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Carlin, RFC 1034 and Lowery before him at the time the invention was made to modify the sales system of Carlin and RFC to include the multiple page servers of Lowery. One would have been motivated to make such a combination for the obvious advantage of releasing the Web server (sales server) to process other requests. See Lowery, col. 2, lines 25-29.

However, Carlin, RFC 1034, and Lowery fail to explicitly teach a central database system adapted to receive listings of items for sale, the listings received from the sales server, the central database to store the listings, wherein the listings are offered on the first sales interface or the second sales interface.

Fisher teaches an electronic auction system similar to the sales system of Carlin, RFC 1034 and Lowery. Furthermore, Fisher teaches a central database system adapted to receive listings of items for sale, the listings received from the sales server, the central database to store the listings, wherein the listings are submitted by the first sales interface and offered on the first sales interface and the second sales interface (taught as the auction system comprising a central database for storing and receiving listings of items for sale, bids on those items, and posting a “catalog page” containing data about the items, at col. 4, line 46 through col. 5, line 6. Fisher shows the listings being received from a sales server, similar to that of Carlin, through the automated uploading of merchandise information to the database, at col. 8, lines 42-53).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Carlin, RFC 1034, Lowery and Fisher before him at the time the invention was made to modify the sales interface of Carlin, RFC 1034 and Lowery to include the auction

server of Fisher. One would have been motivated to make such a combination for the advantage of implementing an automated, continuous auction. See Fisher, col. 4, lines 12-29.

Referring to claim 38, Carlin discloses in col. 2, lines 10-38 a multi-provider online sales system, wherein a plurality of service providers are each allocated a subset of subscriber features and a customized user interface. Figures 3a-3j illustrate the user interface provided by the multi-provider online sales system, which allows each service provider to build a customized sales interface. In col. 5, lines 16-42, Carlin further discloses that each subscriber of a service provider sees the associated online service as independent even though the server providing the interface is maintained by the multi-provider online sales system. In col. 1, lines 19-27, Carlin explains that online services can operate over a TCP/IP network. This embodiment would further require that each sales interface and the host computer be located at a unique network address. Carlin further teaches that the sales server is operative to create the impression to a first user that the first user is still using a first member site through which the first user accessed a first sales interface and to create the impression to a first user that the first user is still using a second member site through which the second user accessed a second sales interface, as the menu system in Carlin remains consistent with the sales interface found in Figs. 3a-3j. Carlin fails to specifically disclose, though, that the sales interfaces operate at different domains. However, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to map each interface to a different domain because of Carlin's suggestion in col. 8, lines 54-56, which says that it should appear to the subscriber that he or she is connected to an online service that is administered by that service provider. One method for providing such an appearance is through the use of subdomains. RFC 1034, published by the Network Working Group in 1987, describes how the domain hierarchy works on page 8:

> A domain is identified by a domain name, and consists of that part of the domain name space that is at or below the domain name which specifies the domain. A domain is a subdomain of another domain if it is contained within that domain. This relationship can be tested by seeing if the subdomain's name ends with the containing domain's name. For example, A.B.C.D is a subdomain of B.C.D, C.D, D, and " ".

Each service provider in Carlin's invention can thus be a subdomain of the domain operated by the multi-provider online sales system. If, for example, the primary domain was multi-provider.com, a plurality of service providers could be mapped to provider1.multi-provider.com, provider2.multi-provider.com, and so on. The service providers' interfaces can then be operated by a single sever while creating the impression that they are operated by unique domains. Subdomains, however, need not necessarily be operated by a single server. After all, yahoo.com and google.com are both subdomains of the .com domain, but are operated by different servers. Accordingly, each service provider can have its own subdomain that is operated by a unique server. For example, site1.provider1.multi-provider.com and site2.provider1.multi-provider.com can be operated by a server that is separate from the one that operates provider1.multi-provider.com and provider2.multi-provider.com. Links can then be created from pages on one server to pages on another server wherein both sets of pages are mapped to the same parent domain. The examiner thus submits that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a hierarchy of domains and subdomains as taught by RFC 1034 in combination with the teachings of Carlin so as to anticipate the claimed invention. As suggested by Carlin, such a combination would have been advantageous because it would allow the multi-provider online sales system to maintain the impression that each sales interface is operated by its respective service provider and not by a single common entity.

Carlin and RFC 1034 fail to explicitly teach a first server at a fourth network address to operate the first set of pages, and a second server at a fifth network address to operate a second set of pages.

Lowery teaches a multi-server architecture similar to that of Carlin and RFC 1034. Furthermore, Lowery teaches a first server at a fourth network address to operate the first set of pages, and a second server at a fifth network address to operate a second set of pages, taught as the use of multiple page servers to handle page requests, at col. 2, lines 20-35 and seen in Fig. 4.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Carlin, RFC 1034 and Lowery before him at the time the invention was made to modify the sales system of Carlin and RFC to include the multiple page servers of Lowery. One would have been motivated to make such a combination for the obvious advantage of releasing the Web server (sales server) to process other requests. See Lowery, col. 2, lines 25-29.

However, Carlin, RFC 1034, and Lowery fail to explicitly teach a central database system adapted to receive listings of items for sale, the listings received from the sales server, the central database to store the listings, wherein the listings are offered on the first sales interface or the second sales interface.

Fisher teaches an electronic auction system similar to the sales system of Carlin, RFC 1034 and Lowery. Furthermore, Fisher teaches a central database system adapted to receive and index bids and listings of items for sale, the listings received from the sales server, the central database to store the listings, wherein the listings are offered on the first sales interface or the second sales interface (taught as the auction system comprising a central database for storing and receiving listings of items for sale, bids on those items, and posting a “catalog page” containing data about the items, at col. 4, line 46 through col. 5, line 6. Fisher shows the listings

being received from a sales server, similar to that of Carlin, through the automated uploading of merchandise information to the database, at col. 8, lines 42-53. See also Fisher, col. 7, lines 24-28 and col. 6, lines 13-29).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Carlin, RFC 1034, Lowery and Fisher before him at the time the invention was made to modify the sales interface of Carlin, RFC 1034 and Lowery to include the auction server of Fisher. One would have been motivated to make such a combination for the advantage of implementing an automated, continuous auction. See Fisher, col. 4, lines 12-29.

Referring to claim 39, the teachings of RFC 1034 are all associated with the Domain Name System (DNS). The mapping of different sites is thus performed via DNS mapping.

Referring to claim 40, Carlin discloses in Table 1 a plurality of services that can be offered via the customized user interfaces, and are inherently presented on different pages linked by the menu structure illustrated in Figure 3j.

Referring to claims 42 and 43, Carlin and RFC 1034 fail to explicitly disclose that the first sales interface includes elements that are also included in the first set of pages and that the second sales interface includes elements that are also included in the second set of pages. However, the examiner submits that it is notoriously well known in the state of the art that pages mapped to the same domain commonly reuse graphical interface elements such as headers, banners, menus, links, and backgrounds so as to maintain a common look and feel when navigating amongst pages. The examiner takes OFFICIAL NOTICE of this teaching. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to include common interface elements among the first and second sales interfaces and their respective sets of pages in order for the multi-provider online sales system to maintain the impression that each sales interface and its associated pages is operated by its respective service provider.

Referring to claim 44, Carlin and RFC 1034 fail to explicitly disclose that sales interfaces include interface elements comprising at least part of their respective domain names. However, the examiner submits that it is notoriously well known in the state of the art that parts of the domain names are typically indicative of the respective service provider's name (e.g. Amazon.com), and are thus very commonly included in sales interfaces. The examiner takes OFFICIAL NOTICE of this teaching. Furthermore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include part of the domain name in a user interface as a mechanism for associating the domain name with the name of the service provider. Such an association makes it easier for users to re a network address and navigate to a service provider's sales interface.

Referring to claim 45, Carlin explains in col. 2, lines 10-20 that the invention is a multi-provider on line service allowing a plurality of service providers to uniquely configure the appearance of their respective user interfaces. Each of these service providers can inherently belong to different legal entities.

Claims 66-68 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carlin, RFC 1034, Fisher, and Sadiq et al (US Patent 6,032,153), hereinafter Sadiq.

Regarding claim 66, Carlin, RFC 1034 and Fisher teach a system similar to that of claim 65. However, Carlin, RFC 1034 and Fisher fail to explicitly teach the publisher subsystem storing an object model representation of the central database system, wherein the representation is for accessing data in the central database system in generating the first or second sales interfaces, and wherein the representation is modified on retrieval of changed records from the central database system.

Sadiq teaches a system for maintaining database persistence in a "shared object system", similar to that of Carlin, RFC 1034 and Fisher. Furthermore, Sadiq teaches storing an object model representation of the central database system, wherein the representation is for accessing data in the central database system in generating the first or second sales interfaces, and wherein the representation is modified on retrieval of changed records from the central database system (taught as the database persistence method of col. 3, line 46 through col. 4, line 44, in which a persistence service monitors and maintains state changes of database attributes, similar to the databases of Carlin, RFC 1034 and Fisher).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Carlin, RFC 1034, Fisher, and Sadiq before him at the time the invention was made to modify the auction system of Carlin, RFC 1034 and Fisher to include the database management of Sadiq. One would have been motivated to make such a combination for the advantage of efficiently updating a shared data source. See Sadiq, col. 2, lines 13-28.

Regarding claim 67, Sadiq teaches the publisher subsystem maintaining a dirty bit to indicate a change since the last generation of the first or second sales interface, as can be seen at col. 4, lines 51-65.

Regarding claim 68, Sadiq teaches the publisher subsystem scanning the central database system to find changed records, and applying rules to determine which changed records incur modifications to the representation, again taught as the use of the persistence service to monitor stored attributes and provide an indication of such change, at col. 4, lines 51-65.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 17 December 2010 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues on pages 12-16 of the remarks that the Carlin, RFC 1043 (Domain Names) and Fisher references fail to teach the limitations of claim 27, specifically "the first domain is a sub-domain of an address mapped to the first member site and that the second domain is a sub-domain of an address mapped to the second member site." The examiner respectfully disagrees. The teaching referred to by Applicant is the Domain Names disclosure that "the hierarchy [of domain names] roughly correspond[] to organizational structure". Applicant's claim discloses that the first and second sales interfaces are operating on different domains, with the first domain being a sub-domain of an address mapped to the first member site, and the second domain being a sub-domain of an address mapped to the second member site. It is this organizational naming convention disclosed by Domain Names that is in use in Applicant's claim. Therefore, with Carlin teaching the use of multiple servers, each operating within different domains (i.e. "multi-provider"), the naming conventions of Domain Names would legitimately map the proper sub-services and sub-domains to the relevant domains.

Applicant further argues that one would not be motivated to "map each interface to a different sub-domain based on the cited text from Carlin", on page 15 of the remarks. Applicant

cites from Carlin, “from a subscriber’s standpoint, it appears that he is connected to an on-line service which is administered by the service provider”. With respect to the mapping of domains and sub-domains, Applicant’s claim 27 states, “the sales server is operative to create the impression to a first user that the first user is still using a first member site through which the first user accessed a first sales interface by mapping the first sales interface to a first domain”, i.e. the mapping is done in such a way as to provide a consistency in appearance to a user throughout a family of sites. This is analogous to the cited portion of Carlin, which takes into account the appearance of the on-line service being administered by a service provider. As such, the examiner contends that one would indeed be motivated to “map each interface to a different sub-domain based on the cited text from Carlin”.

Applicant further argues on page 16 that the cited references fail to teach the use of "member sites" as claimed. As set forth in claim 27, a member site is one through which a user accesses a sales interface. The user is to be given the impression that the sales interface is operating through that member site. This is analogous to the consistency in appearance taught above by Carlin, who aims to convey to a subscriber that an on-line service is administered by a particular service provider.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period

will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MICHAEL ROSWELL whose telephone number is (571)272-4055. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30 - 6:00 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kieu Vu can be reached on (571) 272-4057. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Michael Roswell /MICHAEL ROSWELL/
GAU 2173
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